

REVIEW
OF
THE BOOK —
— DO SOULS EXIST?

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WRITTEN BY SURESH KUMAR SONI

1. THE AUTHOR'S SOUL-STIRRING ENCOUNTER

On the mystical night of August 10, 2003 — coinciding with the Hindu festival of Raksha Bandhan and bathed in the luminous glow of a full moon — Suresh Kumar Soni experienced a spiritual episode that would reshape his life and consciousness.

While seated alone in quiet reflection, he suddenly sensed an invisible, comforting presence — the unmistakable aura of his late father, the renowned Urdu poet Mehr Lal Soni “Zia Fatehabadi.” Though unseen, his father’s essence enveloped him in a gentle, trance-like state.

In an astonishing moment of possession or channeling, Soni began mimicking his father’s idiosyncratic writing gestures — something only family would recognize. Compelled beyond logic, he began to write verses in Urdu — a language he did not know — yet the words flowed effortlessly. He recorded them in Hindi, overwhelmed by the power of the moment.

Upon sharing the experience with his mother, she connected the event to the circumstances of her husband’s death: the same festival, the same full moon, and even a sudden drizzle.

She interpreted it as a divine omen foretelling her departure. Just weeks later, during the sacred Navaratri festival, she passed away peacefully in a state akin to Maha Samadhi — a yogic term for conscious, blissful exit from the body.

For Soni, the experience left an indelible mark: not a dream or hallucination, but a conscious, transcendent encounter that challenged reason and demanded deep reflection on the soul, death, and the mysteries beyond.

2. A BOOK BEYOND GENRE: PERSONAL QUEST MEETS PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

Do Souls Exist? is neither a pure memoir nor a philosophical treatise — it is both. Suresh Kumar Soni invites readers into an honest, humble, and spiritually courageous exploration of one of humanity's most enduring mysteries: the existence of the soul and life after death.

At its heart lies his own inexplicable experience of spiritual contact, but the book moves far beyond autobiography.

Following his personal account, Soni presents a thoughtful sequence of reflections, questions, and meditations on themes such as consciousness, memory, mystical states, and the nature of death. What elevates the work is its refusal to offer certainty.

Rather than preach or persuade, Soni poses powerful questions, leaving space for wonder and skepticism alike.

3. THE HEART OF THE BOOK: DIALOGUE ACROSS CULTURES AND BELIEF SYSTEMS

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of *Do Souls Exist?* is its inclusion of over a hundred responses from individuals across the world — spiritual teachers, scientists, philosophers, psychologists, mediums, and rationalists — each responding to Soni's story and the universal questions it raises.

This polyphonic dialogue transforms the book into a global symposium.

Responses range from Hindu sages and Christian pastors to atheists, neuroscientists, Sufi mystics, and academic philosophers. Together, they reflect the incredible diversity of human belief and the deep longing for answers to what happens after death.

4. A POETIC MOMENT OF REVELATION

A centerpiece of the book is the Urdu ghazal Soni composed during his trance, believed to have been channeled from his father. The poem is rich in philosophical insight and poetic grace, grappling with love, the inner self, illusion, and transcendence.

Whether viewed as spiritual dictation, subconscious genius, or emotional catharsis, it stands as a luminous artifact of the moment — a poetic fingerprint of the soul's hidden dimensions.

5. MAJOR THEMES AND PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERTONES

Soni's reflections tap into both ancient wisdom and modern inquiry. He raises deep philosophical questions:

Can the soul survive death?

Are mystical experiences real, or projections of the subconscious mind?

Is there such a thing as the fourth state of consciousness—Turiya—as described in Vedanta?

Do our ancestors, through memory or spirit, remain with us?

These themes are handled with sincerity, humility, and an openness to multiple interpretations. Rather than settling the debate, the book offers a platform for contemplation.

6. PUBLIC RESPONSE: A TAPESTRY OF PERSPECTIVES

The public response section forms the intellectual and emotional backbone of the book. Responses can be grouped into five major categories:

I. AFFIRMATIONS OF A SPIRITUAL REALITY

Many, including John Sloat, Maria, Swami Tyagananda, and Dr. Raymond Moody, interpret Soni's experience as a true spiritual encounter — an affirmation that the soul is real and capable of posthumous communication. Others like Ron Leonard and Swami Sarvadevananda see it as a sacred karmic unfolding or higher consciousness at work.

II. ROOTED IN RELIGIOUS AND MYSTICAL TRADITIONS

Figures such as Shree Maa, Swami Veda Bharati, and Pema Norbu Rinpoche frame the experience within Hindu, Buddhist, and Sufi cosmologies. These responses view the event as spiritually significant and encourage compassion, prayer, and deeper inquiry.

III. SCIENTIFIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS

Scholars like Mario Beauregard, Si Booth, and Shelly Kagan acknowledge the subjective power of the event while explaining it through neuroscience or psychology. They recognize its meaningful impact without affirming metaphysical conclusions.

IV. RATIONAL SKEPTICISM

Rationalists such as Narendra Nayak and Tanya Smith doubt the spiritual interpretation, leaning toward hallucination, coincidence, or subconscious projection. Richard Swinburne remains cautiously open but requests stronger empirical evidence.

V. ENCOURAGEMENT AND PHILOSOPHICAL OPENNESS

Others, like Betsy Cohen, Faye Scindelka, and Dr. Karan Singh, encourage Soni to trust his inner experience and seek deeper answers through spiritual practice or philosophical study.

7. FINAL VERDICT: A COURAGEOUS OFFERING AT THE EDGE OF MYSTERY

Do Souls Exist? is a rare book — earnest, poetic, vulnerable, and unafraid to venture into the realms where logic fades and mystery begins.

It is as much a spiritual memoir as it is a public philosophical forum, inviting readers into a journey of reflection rather than a destination of dogma.

Recommended For:

Spiritual seekers and mystics

Students of comparative religion and philosophy

Those navigating grief or seeking answers about the afterlife

Readers drawn to mystical literature and poetic introspection

Whether one believes in souls or not, *Do Souls Exist?* compels us to ask the question — and that, perhaps, is its greatest gift.

source: AI Review — CHATGPT

POSTSCRIPT

On the night of Raksha Bandhan, August 10, 2003, Suresh Kumar Soni had a life-altering spiritual encounter — an unseen presence of his late father, poet Mehr Lal Soni “Zia Fatehabadi.” In a trance-like state, he channeled verses in Urdu — a language he did not know — leaving him and his family stunned. Soon after, his mother peacefully passed away, as if the experience had been a divine foretelling.

From this event was born *Do Souls Exist?* — a book that blends personal memoir, philosophical reflection, and global dialogue. Beyond his own experience, Soni raises profound questions about the soul, consciousness, mystical states, and death.

What makes the book extraordinary is its chorus of over a hundred responses — from spiritual masters, scientists, philosophers, skeptics, and seekers worldwide — turning it into a living symposium on one of humanity’s deepest mysteries.

Whether viewed as spiritual truth, psychological phenomenon, or poetic revelation, the book refuses dogma and invites reflection.

📖 Recommended for seekers, skeptics, and all who wonder what lies beyond death.

source: Creative Awareness Trust (CAT)